

REMARKS

Attorney for Applicants has carefully reviewed the outstanding Office Action on the above-identified patent application. Applicants have amended the application, as set forth herein, and respectfully submit that the application, as amended, is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended page 23 of the Specification to provide the correct citation to the Metaxas, et al. article listed therein. This article is cited in the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement submitted on even date herewith, in addition to the Cohen, et al. article mentioned on page 24 of the Specification.

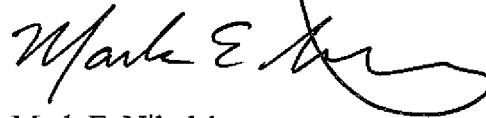
Claims 9, 12-13, 20-22, and 25-26 were indicated in the Office Action as containing allowable subject matter. To expedite issuance of a patent, Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to include the subject matter of allowable dependent Claim 9, and cancelled Claim 9. Allowable dependent Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form as new independent Claim 27, and allowable dependent Claim 13 is included in new Claims 28-35 depending from independent Claim 27. Independent Claim 14 was amended to include the subject matter of allowable dependent Claim 20 and its intervening dependent Claims 18-19, and Claims 18-20 were cancelled. Apparatus Claim 17 was amended to dependent from apparatus Claim 14, instead of method Claim 1. It should be noted that apparatus Claim 18 previously depended from Claim 1 as well (apparatus Claims 19-20 depended from Claim 18; Claims 18-20 were incorporated into apparatus Claim 14). Allowable dependent Claim 25 has been rewritten in independent form as new independent Claim 38, and allowable dependent Claim 26 is included in new Claims 39-49 depending from independent Claim 38.

Applicants make these amendments to expedite issuance of a patent, and make no representation as to the merits of the Office Action. Applicants preserve the right to file one or more continuation applications directed to the subject matter of the cancelled claims, or broader claims.

All issues raised in the Office Action are believed to be addressed. Claims 1, 14, and 17 were amended, Claims 9 and 18-20 were cancelled, and Claims 27-49 were added. Claims 1-8, 10-17, and 21-49 are pending and are in condition for allowance. No new matter has been added. Examination is requested and favorable action solicited.

Dated: 10/11/2007

Respectfully submitted,



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